

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: THURSDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2013
title: GREEN DEAL – GREEN COMMUNITIES
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT – CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: JOHN BARBER – HOUSING OFFICER

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Parishes and Rural Communities of funding opportunities through both the Green Deal and the Rural Community Energy Fund.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objective - Help isolated rural communities to alleviate those living in fuel poverty and to reduce carbon emissions.
- Other considerations - To improve insulation of hard to treat properties and to take advantage of renewable energy technologies.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 There are currently two funding opportunities firstly the Government has announced a new £20million Green Deal Communities scheme to help local authorities target areas, especially of Hard to Treat properties who are off gas areas on a street by street delivery. Information is required to provide commercial providers with suitable properties. These properties can be either owner occupied or privately rented. The Ribble Valley Energy Officer is already in talks with Lancashire colleagues with the aim to submit large bid to meet these objectives. There is a December deadline to submit bids.

2.2 A further source of funding from the government is seeking applications from the following:

- Community Interest Company (CIC).
- Industrial Provident Society (IPS) such as co-operatives.
- Parish Council.
- Registered social landlord.
- Charity.
- Development trust.
- Faith group.

2.3 This grant will be administered by the WRAP (Waste Resources Action Programme) and offers a Grant of £20,000 for a feasibility study and with a further low interest loan of £130,000 to help rural communities install initiatives to deliver renewable energy to their homes. This funding is limited but there is no deadline.

3 ISSUES

3.1 The time scale to reduce Carbon Emission by implementing all mentioned measures is split into several deadlines. At present there is no suggestion of financial

implication if these are not achieved however with the increasing pressure on natural resources this may change, especially for households where available measures are not installed.

- 3.2 The cost of fuel is still increasing and those in isolated communities are already paying more due to the non-availability of mains gas. Renewable energy technology provides great opportunities to address this imbalance using an abundance of free light, wind and water as well as renewable fuels for biomass boilers.
- 3.3 This information may not be known by many rural dwellers and the Parish Liaison group is a useful forum to engage with them and open discussions to support advice and signpost them to the appropriate help. With our partners from the Home Improvement Agency we have expert help readily available.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Financial – No implications to the Council.
- Technical – Help can be offered from Energy Officer and delivery partners.
- Political – Any successful applications would bring positive publicity.
- Reputation - The Council is keen to raise awareness of the availability of grant aid.
- Equality & Diversity - No implications identified.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 To encourage Parish Councils involvement in renewable energy proposals. We also propose to organise a session between 1.30pm and 3pm on Wednesday, 25 September when Parish Councils can come in and discuss any of their proposals with a view to prepare a bid.
- 5.2 This is a real opportunity to make savings for rural dwellers and to improve the conditions of their properties.

JOHN BARBER
HOUSING OFFICER

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 Press release for Gov.Uk re £20m Green Deal Communities.
- 2 Eligibility from WRAP.

For further information please ask for John Barber, extension 3235.

REF: JB/PCLC/5 SEPT 2013